

LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE VENTURING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goal of this course is to teach critical skills needed to compete in changing business environments, where innovation, experimentation, and leadership are the keys to success. Working with your team, you will lead and run an internal venture at a fictional corporation, making decisions that all leaders face as they grow their business.

The course is unique in that you'll not only learn from experts in the field, you'll get to practice making decisions and tackling challenges in a simulated environment. Working with a team of peers, you will receive feedback about the decisions you make for your venture from a variety of sources; that feedback is personalized and designed to help you course-correct when necessary and ensure that the lessons you learn are immediately applicable within the course and outside of the course. The course creates an environment in which you practice making crucial decisions nimbly and thoughtfully so that you can do the same in real life with the added benefit of practice – the mistakes you make in the course are ones you won't make in real life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course is built around the Corporate Innovation Game, which is designed to teach you in three ways:

Learning objectives – skills you will learn and use in the future

Practice objectives – specific experiences you will encounter so that when you see them in real life, you will know what to do

Thinking objectives – mental techniques you will learn that are applicable outside of the context of the course

Learning objectives for the course include:

- ◆ **Leading a successful team.** You will learn techniques for leading teams to success. Detailed learnings include: issues of team dynamics; common sources of team pitfalls such as the Abilene Paradox, social loafing, and relationship conflict; and team chartering
- ◆ **Business experiments:** You will learn the latest approach to corporate strategy through rapid and cheap experimentation. Detailed topics include: conducting business experiments; developing assumptions; testing hypotheses through quick experiments; making data-driven decisions (should you persist or pivot?) based on the results of your experiments
- ◆ **Building teams and organizations.** You will learn how to organize and set up a hiring process to build successful teams. Detailed topics include: how to set up and run a consistent and

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informative hiring process using interviewing techniques, work samples, and scorecards; you'll also learn how to avoid hiring mistakes so that every hire contributes to your business

- ◆ **Sales and marketing.** You will learn how to analyze markets and select customers to target for new products and services. Detailed topics include: how to choose customers to maximize growth and revenue; determine pricing and features for new products; marketing and business model approaches
- ◆ **Negotiations.** You will learn how to conduct a negotiation. Detailed topics include: how to think about your BATNA and your counterparts' BATNA; first offers; building trust; common interests
- ◆ **Pitching and persuasion.** You will learn how to pitch new ideas and persuade stakeholders of the value of your business concept. Detailed topics include: how to build a compelling business case; how to structure an argument; how to put together a persuasive elevator pitch
- ◆ **Personal leadership ability.** You will learn how to inspire a team, avoid team pitfalls, and how to achieve consensus

Practice objectives for the course include:

- ◆ **Experiencing the types of data generated by business experiments.** You'll analyze surveys, conduct market tests, and glean information from customer interviews
- ◆ **Leading during a time of uncertainty and change.** You'll make consequential decisions for your business at a time of change and learn how to navigate your team through uncertain times
- ◆ **Engaging with critical stakeholders in high-stakes settings.** You'll interact with key customers, managers, and employees
- ◆ **Navigating through common points of failure for internal ventures.** You'll navigate team dynamics, encounter process losses and gains and take on the challenges of scaling a venture

Thinking objectives for the course include:

- ◆ **Perspective-taking and the ability to analyze multiple viewpoints.** You'll recognize and examine the perspectives of your customers, employees, and competitors and see the world as they do
- ◆ **Improvisation and bricolage.** You'll solve novel problems and deal with the constraints imposed by a new venture environment
- ◆ **Self-monitoring and metacognition.** You'll conduct after action reviews to help your team take stock of and learn from their actions; and you'll get a chance to reflect on what you have learned throughout the course
- ◆ **Self-efficacy and the confidence to overcome challenges.** You'll gain the confidence to overcome challenges and explore different ways of thinking through those challenges throughout the course

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INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The course is designed for you to learn about key concepts in innovation and strategy through a fast-paced experience. We designed the course with specific learning strategies in mind. You will learn through **direct instruction, feedback, interleaving, testing, and reflection.**

You will be given a lot of direct instruction about key concepts – through videos, emails, documents, and calls – and you will need to apply what you learned. Early decisions will be less consequential than later decisions, and you'll get a chance to practice before committing to a course of action.

As you make those early decisions, you'll receive feedback that addresses your choices and that gives you helpful tips about what you should do to improve. Later on, you may be tested on what you have learned through a consequential decision. We built this kind of support around key concepts so that you get a chance to practice and apply what you learn multiple times and at different stages in the simulation.

Key concepts are connected and resurface throughout the course. This interleaving of concepts gives you a chance to apply what you learned earlier in a new situation. We also built reflection into the course so that you can take stock of what you learned. You'll be asked to review what happened and why it happened and consider the adjustments you should make to improve. You'll be prompted with opportunities for guided reflection both individually and as a team through an after-action review.

COURSE PREREQUISITE

[BlueSky Ventures Game](#) is a 90-minute individual learner course in which you learn how to evaluate ventures using a framework and make decisions about which venture to back using data and financial projections. This experience will introduce you to key concepts - experimentation, hiring, financing, persuasion - that will be explored in depth in the Corporate Innovation Game.

REQUIREMENTS

The course is designed as a 22 hour, 3-week experience or an intensive, in which you are required to work with your team throughout the experience. The course is divided into periods of time in which you'll be working together with your team (synchronous periods) and periods of time in which you won't be all together (asynchronous periods).

You should expect that many events will happen during the synchronous periods; but the course continues during asynchronous periods. If you just work during synchronous periods, you will not be able to complete the course.

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At every synchronous period, you'll need to check in with Gloria, a character in the course. This will serve as your attendance check-in.

During the course, you'll need to:

Actively work with your team. Playing in teams of 4-6, you and your team will be competing against other teams; to do well and learn all you can, you will need to support your teammates, and you'll need their support as well. A key skill to practice in the game is your ability to work well with a team and navigate common team pitfalls. You will get support to make your team successful and to ensure an optimal learning experience.

Commit to 6 synchronous sessions with your team. The course is designed around 6 synchronous periods; that means there will be a lot to do during these periods. Every team member is required to be online at the same time during these sessions.

Commit to working with your team outside of the synchronous sessions. There will be a lot of information coming at you during the synchronous periods. But to do well, you'll need to put in some time outside of those sessions. For instance, there will be instructional videos by Wharton faculty that will pop up during asynchronous periods, and watching these will help you improve and make good decisions in the course.

ASSESSMENT

The primary way you are assessed is through decisions you make in the course for your team. Decisions will be graded, and you will receive points for these decisions. You may also have an individual grade point total that differs from the group total, depending on factors such as how your teammates rate you and your attendance.

COURSE MATERIALS

All course materials are available in the course interface. You don't need any other materials for the course, but you can and should do additional research throughout the course to help you make decisions. Your **Feedback** section contains many useful resources that will help you during the course. Under **My Progress**, you can read feedback about major choices; read this section carefully as it will contain both feedback about specific decisions and tips for improving. The **My Library** section has many useful videos featuring the course author sharing key ideas and experts who will share their advice and perspectives about key topics covered in the course.

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ENROLLMENT OPTIONS

Enrollment in the course is open to all learners who have successfully completed the BlueSky Ventures Game. The course is run as either a 3-week, 6 synchronous sessions experience or as an intensive:

- For the 3-week option, you can enroll in Core Experience or either Wharton Certificate options
- For the intensive, you can enroll in our Standard Wharton Certificate option

Certificates are shareable on LinkedIn, your resume, and other documents.

Elements of the Course	Core Experience	Standard Certificate	Advanced Certificate
Class material	✓	✓	✓
Expert videos	✓	✓	✓
Personalized feedback	✓	✓	✓
An adaptive debrief	✓	✓	✓
Takeaways	✓	✓	✓
Live office hour session		✓	✓
Graded Assignments			✓
Weekly live office hours			✓
Live Debrief			✓

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE?

[Contact us](#) and we will be happy to help.